

GRANTING CLAIMANTS PREFERENCE RIGHT TO PURCHASE LANDS

JANUARY 13, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. DRIVER, from the Committee on the Public Lands, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 9765]

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9765) granting to certain claimants the preference right to purchase unappropriated public lands, having considered the same, report it to the House with the recommendation that it do pass, with the following amendments:

1. Add a new section to the bill, as follows:

SEC. 2. That all purchases made and patents issued under the provisions of this act shall be subject to and contain a reservation to the United States of all the coal, oil, gas, and other minerals in the lands so purchased and patented, together with the right to prospect for, mine and remove the same.

2. Page 2, line 1, after the word "who," insert a comma and the words "or whose predecessor in interest."

The necessity for the legislation is fully explained in a letter from the Secretary of the Interior, dated December 20, 1924, to the chairman of this committee, which letter is hereinafter set out in full for the information of the House, as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, December 20, 1924.

Hon. N. J. SINNOTT,
*Chairman Committee on the Public Lands,
House of Representatives.*

MY DEAR MR. SINNOTT: I have your request for report on H. R. 9765, granting to certain claimants a preference right to purchase unappropriated public lands. I approve the general purposes of the bill, and I am of the opinion that it is sufficiently broad in its scope to enable this department to administer its provisions in such manner that the interests of all parties, including settlers or entrymen under the public land laws, will be properly protected. The public lands in the State of Louisiana, however, are subject to the mineral laws, and it is known that oil and gas in paying quantities have been found in that State.

The bill should be amended so as to conserve to the United States the minerals, including oil and gas, and the addition of the following section is suggested:

"Sec. —. That all purchases made and patents issued under the provisions of this act shall be subject to and contain a reservation to the United States of all the coal, oil, gas, and other minerals in the lands so purchased and patented, together with the right to prospect for, mine, and remove the same."

If amended in the manner above suggested, enactment of the bill is recommended.

Very truly yours,

HUBERT WORK.